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A History of VINCENNES UNIVERSITY

A History of Vincennes University

By

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Vincennes University

Its Inception

"Religion, morality and knowledge, being necessary to good government and the happiness of mankind, schools and the means of education shall forever be encouraged."

THIS WISE PROVISION was contained in the Ordinance of 1787, adopted by the Continental Congress for the government of the Territory Northwest of the River Ohio. It was adopted only eight years after that vast domain, most of which was a wilderness infested with savage Indians, had been taken from the British by General George Rogers Clark, as a result of the capture of Vincennes, February 23, 1779. With prophetic vision and foresight, the fathers laid the foundation for a great system of popular education in that rich empire which has come to be known as the "Valley of Democracy" and the "Heart of America," and out of which have been carved the five great states of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan and Wisconsin.

In compliance with the spirit of the Ordinance of 1787, Congress, on March 26, 1804, passed an act providing that in each of the land districts of Vincennes, Detroit, and Kaskaskia the secretary of the treasury should set apart a township of land for the use of a "seminary of learning." On October 10, 1806, the secretary of the treasury designated township two (Patoka Township), in Gibson County, Indiana Territory, for the use of the institution which was to be established in the Vincennes district. By an act of the Legislative Council and the House of Representatives of the Indiana Territory, which was adopted November 29, 1806, and supplemented by a similar act of September 17, 1807, the Vincennes University was incorporated.

Fac simile of the minutes of the first session of the Board of Trustees of Vincennes University, bearing date of December 6, 1806.

At a meeting of the Trustees of the Vincennes University held at the Territorial Secretary's Office in Vincennes on Saturday the 6th day of December Anno Domini 1806 pursuant and under the Acts of the last Session of the General Assembly, One entitled "An Act to Incorporate an University in the Indiana Territory" And the other "An Act Supplemental to the aforesaid Act." When were present the following members. To wit

William Henry Harrison	Samuel Gwathmey
John Gibson Secty	John Johnson
Willis Taylor	Jake Decker
Henry Vanderburg	Francois Vigo
John Badollet	William Bullet Jr
Nathaniel Ewing	James Johnson
John K. Jones	George Wallace Junr
Jacob Kuykendall	and
Elias C. Vanmee	Genl W. Johnston

The Board proceeded by Ballot to elect a President when upon counting the Ballots William Henry Harrison Esqr was declared duly elected by an unanimous vote when he was conducted to the Chair from whence he made acknowledgments and required an observance of an Order & decorum

The Board then proceeded in like manner to elect a Treasurer when upon counting the Ballots James Johnson Esqr was declared duly elected.

The Board then proceeded in like manner to elect a Clerk when upon counting the Ballots Genl W. Johnston was declared duly elected.

The Board then proceeded in like manner to elect six Managers to attend and carry into effect the Scheme of a Lottery so authorised by said Act. When upon counting the Ballots Willis Taylor, George Wallace Jr Esqr and M.Williams Bullet Junr were declared duly elected.

No other two persons having a Majority of the whole number of the members present The Board proceeded by Ballot to elect two other Managers when upon counting the ballots William Henry Harrison Esqr was declared duly elected.

No other person having a Majority of the whole number of members present The Board proceeded by ballot to elect one other Manager when upon counting the Ballots Benjamin Parke Esqr was declared duly elected.

Thus, with a charter granted by the territorial legislature, and with a rich heritage of 23,040 acres of virgin land, the gift of the federal government itself, there came into being old Vincennes University, the subject of this sketch.

The First Board of Trustees

No more distinguished group of men could have been assembled in Indiana Territory than was the original board of trustees of the Vincennes University which met and formally organized on December 6, 1806. There was William Henry Harrison, the young governor of Indiana Territory, destined to become the ninth President of the United States, who was elected the first president of the board. There was old Francis Vigo, the patriot of the Revolution, whose assistance so materially aided General Clark in his historic campaign of 1779. There also were John Gibson, secretary of the territory; Waller Taylor, who became the first United States senator from Indiana; Benjamin Parke, the first judge of the United States district court for the district of Indiana; and Nathaniel Ewing, who became the first president of the Bank of Indiana. The other trustees were Thomas T. Davis, Henry Vanderburgh, Peter Jones, James Johnson, John Badolett, John Rice Jones, George Wallace, William Bullitt, Elias McNamee, Henry Huse, General W. Johnson, Jacob Kuykendoll, Samuel McJee, George Leach, Luke Decker, Samuel Gwathmey and John Johnson, all of whom were prominent and outstanding characters in the pioneer life of Indiana's territorial days. No less than five counties in Indiana were named for men who were members of the original board of trustees of Vincennes University.

The First College Building

Soon after its organization the board of trustees proceeded to sell 4,000 acres of its estate in order to obtain funds with which to establish the college, authority for this action having been granted by the charter. This land was sold for $2.50 per acre, and while this price seems ridiculously low according to present day standards, yet the sum realized from the transaction was adequate for the immediate needs of the institution. Out of this fund the board purchased a campus site adjacent to the town, comprising a tract of land which is now bounded by Perry, Sixth, Hart, and Fifth streets.

William Henry Harrison, as he appeared while Governor of Indiana Territory and President of the Board of Trustees of Vincennes University.

In 1807 the board undertook the erection of a college building, but materials were scarce and contractors were few, so the structure, although begun that year, was not fully completed until the spring of 1819; however, a part of it was ready for occupancy in 1811. This is said to have been the second brick building erected in Vincennes, the home of General Harrison having been the first. It was a commodious and dignified structure for its time and place, 42 by 60 feet in size, was two and a half stories, and trimmed with native sandstone.

What a priceless relic this old college hall would be, had it been preserved! The first college building in the state, it was built at a time when there were only some two dozen institutions of higher learning in all the country. In 1811 a finished portion of this building was used as a meeting place by the territorial legislature. In 1812 it served as a temporary hospital for the wounded soldiers who were brought down the Wabash river on rafts from the battle of Tippecanoe. In 1839 the University had become financially involved and was sold to the Bishop of Vincennes for $6,500, after which time it became the home of St. Gabriel's College, a Catholic institution for the training of young men for the priesthood. Afterwards it was in turn an orphanage for boys, then for girls; and in 1875 St. Rose Academy, a school for girls conducted by the Sisters of Providence, was established in this same building. In 1861, during the Civil War, it again became a hospital for soldiers of the 19th Illinois Regiment, who were wounded in a frightful railroad wreck.

This venerable structure was razed in 1884, to allow the streets of the growing city to extend through the campus lands. For nearly three-quarters of a century this building was affectionately known to the inhabitants of Vincennes as "the College," and with its passing went a landmark of the pioneer days about which clustered many tender memories.

The College Established

In April, 1811, the board arranged with the Rev. Samuel T. Scott, a pioneer Presbyterian minister of Vincennes, to open the college for instruction. Reverend Scott was a learned and cultured gentleman, and was identified with the University for many years as president, trustee, and treasurer of the board. He died in 1827 and is buried in the old city cemetery.

The first college building of Vincennes University, begun in 1807, occupied in 1811, and completed in 1819. The wing at the left was added subsequently. The building stood on the site of the present Saint Rose Academy. It was razed in 1884.

The courses of study offered during the first term embraced English grammar, Latin, Greek, geography and mathematics—a rather formidable curriculum for the youth of that day. A regulation of the board required each student to provide on the campus at the beginning of the school year "a wagon load or three cart loads of wood" for fuel.

In 1806 there was also organized at Vincennes a subscription library. Among the moving spirits in its establishment were many of the same men that constituted the original board of trustees of the University, General Harrison being the chairman of the first meeting. This library accumulated a fine collection of books and remained in existence until 1884, when its possessions passed to the University. Many rare old volumes from this source are yet to be found on the shelves of the library of the University.

The University and the Vincennes Library Company both served to bring to Vincennes, during the colonial period, an air of culture and refinement that left a lasting imprint upon its community life.

An Interesting Bit of Indiana History

In the proceedings of the board of trustees of August 11, 1807, it is recorded that Jonathan Jennings was elected clerk of the board, William Henry Harrison being at the time president. On April 4, following, a motion was made and adopted that a committee be appointed to inquire into the conduct of the clerk. Shortly thereafter General Harrison tendered his resignation as a trustee. In turn, then, a successor was elected for Jennings, and Harrison was again made a trustee.

These events, of themselves, would seem neither important nor interesting, but it is more than probable that they had a lasting effect not only on the University, but upon the state of Indiana as well, resulting in Vincennes failing to become the capital of the state and the seat of the state university.

At the time of the occurrences referred to above, Harrison was governor of Indiana Territory and Jennings was a young lawyer of Vincennes, destined to become the first governor of the state. Harrison held his position by appointment of the President and confirmation by the United States Senate. It was a post of almost unlimited power and influence. Jennings, on the other hand, was just on the threshold of a political career that was to bring him great prominence and success

Jonathan Jennings, first Governor of Indiana, and Clerk of the Board of Trustees of Vincennes University in 1807.

because of his personal popularity. He referred to Harrison as the "Virginia Aristocrat" and to himself as the champion of "the people." Jennings was a staunch abolitionist, while Harrison had pro-slavery leanings.

Almost coincident with Jennings' removal from the position of clerk of the board of trustees of the University, he and Harrison became pronounced political, if not personal, enemies. It is more than likely that there was a connection between these incidents.

Harrison occupied a high social position in Vincennes. He had built there the finest brick house west of the Alleghanies and he had invested heavily in lands in the vicinity of the town. All these holdings were destined to grow tremendously in value if Vincennes should remain the capital. Jennings, on the other hand, manifested no particular desire to attain wealth; his ambitions were more along political lines. He had no interests in Vincennes that could not be readily sacrificed for his political advancement.

It was not unnatural, therefore, that in his designs upon Harrison, Jennings should have advocated the removal of the territorial capital to Corydon. This would require Harrison's removal to that place, which was a hundred miles distant from Vincennes and from his staunchest friends and political supports. In this undertaking Jennings was successful and in 1813 the seat of government was established at Corydon.

A few years later, during Jennings' second term as governor (January 20, 1820), the state legislature granted a charter to the institution at Bloomington, which is known today as Indiana University. Two days thereafter a joint resolution was passed, which was likewise approved by Jennings, appointing a superintendent to rent the 19,040 acres of land belonging to Vincennes University in Gibson County, and directing that the rentals be paid into the state treasury. In 1822 the legislature ordered that these lands be sold and the proceeds appropriated to the uses of the state.

Thus, but for the intense political jealousy and hatred of Jonathan Jennings, the first governor of Indiana, for William Henry Harrison, the territorial governor and afterwards the President of the United States, Vincennes might be today the capital of the state, and its old University might be duly recognized and publicly supported as the University of Indiana.

Female Seminary of Vincennes University, 1856 to 1870. It stood on the lot where the Post Office now stands.

Dark Days for the University

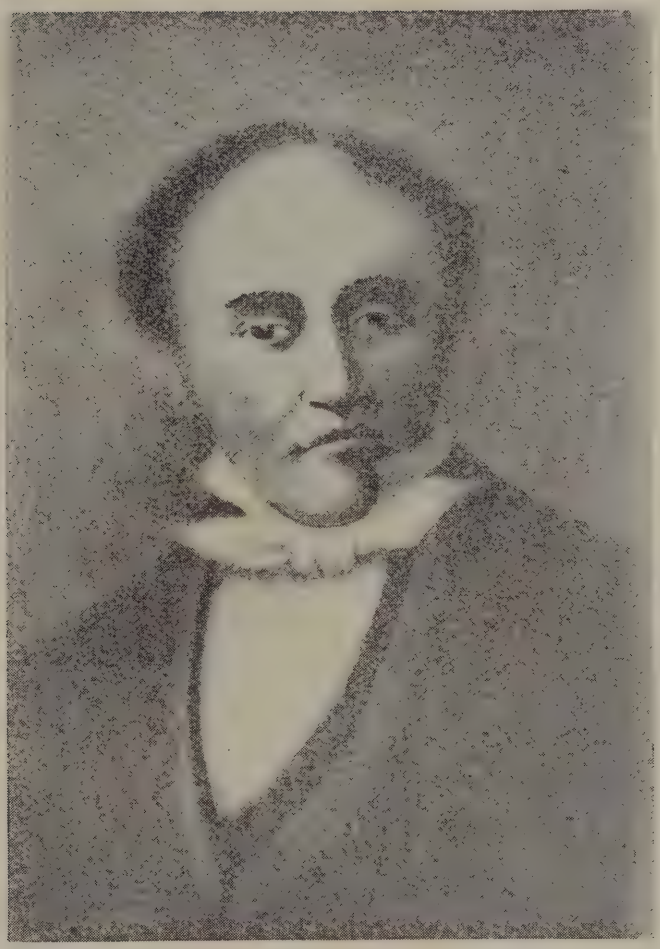
Almost from its establishment the University suffered from the lack of proper financial support. The initial 4,000 acres of land that were sold barely produced sufficient funds to complete the first college building. An effort was made to raise money by means of a lottery, authorized by the charter, but a deficit, rather than a profit, resulted from this enterprise.

In 1817 and again in 1818 the board petitioned Congress for authority to sell the remainder of its lands at not less than $10 per acre, but the permission was denied. A memorial was also submitted asking for a tax on salt and marriage licenses for the support of the institution. The request was likewise denied. It has already been related how the lands of the University in Gibson County were seized by the state in 1820 and ordered sold in 1822. To complete the scheme of destruction, the legislature in 1824 incorporated a new institution at Vincennes, to be known as the "Knox County Seminary," and attempted to transfer unto it all the property and rights belonging to the University. For fifteen years the Knox County Seminary masqueraded in the habiliments of Vincennes University, but on October 5, 1839, it relinquished all its claim to the assets of the University.

In the meantime, the property and building of the University had been allowed to deteriorate to such an extent that on January 22, 1831, the following order was made by the board of trustees: "Resolved, that from and after this date there shall not be allowed any family, person or persons, to occupy any part of the building except those who are engaged in the business of teaching and the scholars. Neither shall there be allowed any horse, cow or hog, or any other animal whatsoever, to run at large in said seminary lot, or be kept in any of the lower rooms, called the cellar, to the injury of the lot or cellar rooms."

During the interval between the time of dispossession and restoration, debts had accumulated against the University to the amount of $1,830.40. To meet these obligations the board was obliged to sell the college campus and building. The property was disposed of to the Bishop of Vincennes for a consideration of $6,500.00 on October 24, 1839.

After paying its debts, the board rented a small brick building at the corner of Fifth and Main streets and re-established the college, thus



Samuel Judah, distinguished pioneer lawyer of Vincennes. He was to Vincennes University what Daniel Webster was to Dartmouth.

discharging, to the best of its ability, the obligation imposed upon it by the government of the United States and the Territory of Indiana—an obligation which is perpetual and without end!

A Fight for Redress

In 1842 the board of trustees of the University concluded to seek redress from the state for the loss of the lands wrongfully taken from it. To this end Samuel Judah of Vincennes, one of the ablest attorneys Indiana has ever produced, was employed. Mr. Judah briefed the facts of the controversy and then sought an opinion from the distinguished jurist, Chancellor Kent. The chancellor, after examining all the acts of Congress and the legislature of Indiana on the subject, sent an elaborate and exhaustive opinion in favor of the University's contention, saying in conclusion: "I am of the opinion that the legislature of Indiana is bound by the most imperious obligations of justice and honor to indemnify the University for this unconstitutional arrest and detention of its property." Thereupon, Mr. Judah went into the Gibson County courts and began actions to dispossess the occupants of the lands belonging to the University, pleading that the acts of the state of Indiana in seizing them and in disposing of them were unconstitutional. The occupants of the lands were principally farmers, who had purchased this land from the state in good faith. A small rebellion was precipitated, and the attorneys of the University were threatened with violence. After some preliminary litigation, an understanding was reached that the members of the legislature from Gibson and Knox Counties would join in securing the passage of an act empowering the University to sue the state to determine the rightful ownership of these lands. Such a bill was passed in 1846. A suit was filed by the University in the Marion circuit court at Indianapolis. The jury found for the University for $30,096.66. The state appealed to its supreme court, which reversed the decision of the court below. The University appealed then to the Supreme Court of the United States. In an opinion delivered by the chief justice in 1852, the highest court in the land reversed the Supreme Court of Indiana and fully and completely vindicated the University's claims.

The only effect of this decision of the Supreme Court of the United States was to establish the justice of the University's claims as a matter of law, settlement therefor being left solely to the discretion of the

legislative branch of the state government. As a matter of fact, settlement, on the basis of the real loss to the University, has never been made. In 1855 the state paid the University $66,585.00, out of which the University was obliged to pay its attorneys $28,228.00. In 1895 an additional $15,000.00 was paid. In 1907 bonds for $120,548.00 were authorized to be issued by the legislature, over the veto of Governor Hanly. After the expiration of Mr. Hanly's term he brought suit as a private citizen to enjoin the delivery of these bonds. This case also went to the Supreme Court, which decided against the ex-governor, and on March 22, 1911, the University received bonds and accrued interest aggregating $135,016.76.

A volume would not record the long and laborious fights waged by the University and its friends in courts and in legislative halls for redress of the wrongs done it, but the above will indicate, in a measure, the nature and extent of the struggle.

Presidents of the University

The presidents of Vincennes University and the years of their inauguration are as follows:

1811—SAMUEL T. SCOTT
1815—JESSE OLDS
1818—JEAN JEAN
1823—HENRY SHAW
1840—B. B. KILLIKELLY
1845—GEORGE B. JOCELYN
1850—PROF. MATHEWS
1855—R. M. CHAPMAN
1867—O. C. DRAKE
1868—JAMES N. NAYLOR
1870—GEORGE PARROTT
1872—LOUIS PRUGH
1881—E. A. HAIGHT
1882—PITT L. MCCREARY
1883—ENOCH A. BRYAN
1893—EDWARD P. CUBBERLY
1896—A. H. YODER
1900—W. H. HERSHMAN
1902—JAMES E. MANCHESTER
1904—HORACE ELLIS
1914—WILLIAM HALNON
1923—J. W. MORLAND
1924—WALTER A. DAVIS

The University and the Spanish-American War

About 1890, military instruction was established at Vincennes University. The war department was induced to detail a graduate of West Point as instructor in military tactics, and the "V. U. Cadets" became an important feature in the life of the old college.

When war was declared against Spain on April 25, 1898, the

Company L, 159th Ind. Vol. Inf., in the Spanish-American War, composed of Vincennes University Cadets.

Cadets volunteered their services to the governor of Indiana. Two days later their offer was accepted by the following mobilization order:

> Indianapolis, Ind., April 27, 1898.
>
> Commanding Officer University Cadets,
> Vincennes, Ind.
>
> Have company ready to leave Union Station, Vincennes, at 6:20 tomorrow morning for Indianapolis. Receipt to conductor for transportation.
>
> JAMES K. GORE, Adjt. Gen.

Eighty-six cadets responded, and on May 12, 1898, they were mustered into the service of the United States as Co. L, 159th Ind. Vol. Inf. Thus, after nearly one hundred years, the benefactions of Congress were repaid by the students in taking up arms in their country's defense. The electrical effect of these events upon the free and natural student life of the old college can hardly be pictured. There was, of course, a banquet tendered the youthful soldiers by the faculty and trustees, and the co-eds presented the company with an elegant silk standard. But deeper than all these outward manifestations of concern and gratitude was the solemn realization that the country was at war, and that the flower of Old Vincennes had passed out of her classic halls to fight the battles of the republic against a foreign foe.

The students who did remain in college were more concerned in cable dispatches from Manila Bay and Santiago than in the history of the crusades or of Cæsar's campaigns and the college was very much demoralized.

Company L was mustered out of service on November 23, 1898, but few of the former V. U. Cadets ever returned to their alma mater. Some entered careers of business, while others went to larger institutions to complete their college training.

Speaking of the University's contribution to the Spanish-American War, the late Dr. Hubbard M. Smith, in his history of the college, says: "This was the first volunteer company to offer its services to the governor of the state, and the only full company of cadets sent by any state institution of learning in the Union, to engage in the Spanish War."

Roster of Co. L, 159th Ind. Vol. Inf. (V. U. Cadets)

ROBERT A. SIMPSON, *Captain*
LEE B. PURCELL, *1st Lieutenant*
JOHN B. BAYARD, *2nd Lieutenant*
WINFIELD ROBINSON, *1st Sergt.*
WILLIAM R. KENNEDY, *2nd Sergt.*
HARRY T. WATTS, *2nd Sergt.*
MAURICE F. BAYARD, *3rd Sergt.*
WILLIAM T. PURCELL, *4th Sergt.*
LEWIS HOLMAN, *1st Corp.*
BARNEY F. GREENHOW, *2nd Corp.*
CHARLES A. THUIS, *3rd Corp.*
MARION F. YELTON, *4th Corp.*
RAY G. AGNEW
SMILEY JOHNSON
ANDREW ROSEMAN
ALBERT E. ALBRIGHT
WILLIAM ALTON
FRANK ALTON
JAMES E. BAILEY
LOUIS R. BAILEY
SETH J. BALLOW
JUDY K. BARNES
CLARENCE BICKNELL
EDWARD E. BLACKWELL
CLARK BLEDSOE
LOUIS W. BOUCHIE
JOHN J. BREEN
ISAAC S. BRYANT
JOHN C. BURKE
BENJAMIN CARTER
HOWARD CARTER
DON H. CASSELL
CHARLES C. CASTOR
WILLIAM L. CRUM
WALTER L. DAUGHERTY
THOMAS DUNN
WILLIAM C. EMISON
THOMAS F. FIELDS
GEORGE B. FLEMING
KARL T. FOREMAN
CHARLES L. GARDNER
ERWIN L. REEL
ROBERT GWIN
JOHN E. HARTIGAN
ANDREW D. HAUCK
CLAUDE M. HOUSE
CLARENCE R. HUFFMAN
WALTER C. HUFFMAN
WILLIAM E. HURST
CHARLES A. JOHNSON
EDWARD P. JOHNSON
CHARLES O. KELSO
FRANK KNEIPP
OZRO B. LLOYD
MARTIN E. MARONE
JAMES MCCRISAKIN
FLORENCE MCCARTY
LOUIS A. ORGAN
OWEN M. O'ROURKE
HARRY H. OWEHNE
ROLAND L. PERRY
CHARLES W. PICKERELL
HERMAN F. PIEL
EMERY M. REEDY
ERWIN E. ROBESON
LOUIS H. ROBERTS
EARNEST RUDDY
EDGAR Z. RYAN
JAMES O. SICKLES
PAUL W. SIMPSON
AMMON E. SMITH
JOSEPH SMITH
OATH H. SMITH
EDWARD T. THUIS

HARRY B. TRUDLEY
HARRY TURNER
WILLIAM H. VAUGHN
EDWARD C. VIEKE
CHARLES WEGER
ANTON J. WIRTH
BURFORD MCOUAT
MAURICE DEMEREE
WALTER SHIRTS

The Sigma Pi Fraternity

On February 26, 1897, four students of Vincennes University, William Raper Kennedy, James Thompson Kingsbury, George Morton Patterson and Rolin Rosco James, founded an organization at the College known as the Tau Phi Delta Society. It was of a fraternal and literary nature. It grew and developed in strength and esteem as a student organization until February 11, 1907, when it changed its name to the *Sigma Pi Fraternity of the United States*, and became a men's national collegiate fraternity.

Sigma Pi is now (1927) represented with active chapters in twenty-six of the leading educational institutions in the country, scattered from Pennsylvania to California and from Michigan to Louisiana. It owns real property aggregating in value more than a half million dollars. It maintains an administrative office in charge of a paid executive at Roselle, N. J., and publishes a quarterly magazine called *The Emerald*. On two occasions, in 1922 and in 1926, the fraternity held its national conventions at Vincennes, to better acquaint its members with the history and traditions of the mother chapter. Eighteen members of the fraternity made the supreme sacrifice in the World War. One of the members, a student from Purdue University, was the first college-trained soldier in the American army to lay down his life in France.

Sigma Pi now has more than 4,000 members, all of whom are interested in old Vincennes University, as the birthplace of their college fraternity.

Service to the Community

Prior to 1853 Vincennes had no public school system. All the educational advantages which the community offered were supplied by Vincennes University and the parochial schools. The Vincennes High School was established in 1873, although the University had been offering work of high school grade twenty years previously.

In 1873 the University broadened the scope of its curriculum

again, this time to the junior college grade. Prior thereto it had withheld printed recognition from its pupils, but in 1874, four students having completed successfully the courses of study allotted to them received diplomas. Since that time the custom of giving diplomas to those who have completed the prescribed work has continued.

For many years the courses of study of the University have embraced teachers' training, and a recent survey (1927) has revealed that fully ninety per cent of all the teachers in the public schools of Knox County have received all, or a part, of their professional training in this institution. In one township every teacher employed had attended Vincennes University.

The annual attendance of the institution is now more than two hundred. When it is considered that the average cost of a year's attendance at college away from home is about $1,000.00, it will readily be seen that, from an economic standpoint, Vincennes University is eminently worth while to the community.

It is a fact generally recognized by educators that the grade of instruction received in a small institution like Vincennes University is superior in many respects to that to be had in the larger institutions. This superiority in work is due in part to the fact that the student comes into more intimate contact with his instructor in the small institution.

The great increase in the number of accredited junior colleges, public as well as private, within the past few years, is another proof that Vincennes University occupies a sound position in the educational field. It is Indiana's pioneer junior college, as well as the oldest institution of higher learning in the state.

The Government of the University

By the terms of its charter, granted by the legislature of Indiana Territory in 1806, twenty-three trustees were named for the University. They and their successors were to enjoy continual succession in perpetuity. By that statement was meant that as vacancies occurred on the board by death or resignation, the remaining trustees elected successors, all serving for life.

In the winter of 1922-23 a crisis arose which threatened the life of the college. The alumni organized and were successful in their efforts to preserve the institution. As a result of this experience, the board granted to the alumni the privilege of nominating four of the trustees.

The alumni trustees, selected by this method, were elected for four-year terms.

It was found that alumni representation on the board was helpful in fostering the interest of former students in the welfare of the institution; consequently the state legislature, at its 1927 session, was prevailed upon to give its consent to a formal amendment to the charter. By the terms of this law the board is composed of fifteen members. Three of these are ex-officio trustees, they being the president of the University, the superintendent of schools of Knox County and the superintendent of schools of the city of Vincennes. Of the remaining twelve trustees, six are elected by the alumni of the college and six by the board. All elective trustees serve for three years, the terms being so arranged that two trustees chosen by the alumni and two elected by the board will expire with each stated October session of the trustees.

It is confidently believed that by providing for substantial alumni representation on the board, and limiting the terms of trustees to three years, unless they are re-elected, more interest will be manifested in the welfare and development of the college.

The alumni now maintain an organization of the former students and regularly observe Foundation Day on December 6th.

Status and Needs of the University

While Vincennes University has very little supporting endowment, it is free from debt. It is a remarkable fact that it has operated for nearly a century and a quarter and has now unincumbered real estate, representing in value every dollar that it has received from any source, other than tuition. In other words, its capital investment has never been depleted.

The following constitutes the source of all permanent funds which it has ever received:

1806 to 1817—From sale of 4,000 acres of land	$ 10,000.00
1855—From State of Indiana, bonds	66,585.00
1895—From State of Indiana, appropriation	15,000.00
1911—From State of Indiana, bonds and interest	135,016.76
Total	$226,601.76

As representing this aggregate sum, the University owns in fee three-quarters of a block in the heart of the city of Vincennes, upon

The present college building, Fifth and Busseron Streets, Vincennes. It was erected in 1878, a wing having been added to the south and west ends in 1889.

E E

which are located the college building, four rental residences, and a small office building. The college also owns ten and a half acres of unimproved land, adjoining Harmony Park on Fairground avenue, purchased in 1923.

The present college building was erected in 1878. It is not modern, and is poorly located and equipped for the purposes of the institution. The land that it occupies is valuable, but unsuited for a campus.

By reducing its teaching force and limiting the courses offered to the bare minimum that will meet the standards imposed by the accrediting agencies, and by enforcing the strictest economy in matters of administration, the University has been able to operate without a deficit (1927). In order to thus operate, however, it has been necessary to deny admission to a large number of students who would have matriculated, had it been possible to broaden the curriculum to embrace more of the work that a standard junior college ought to offer.

For nearly a century and a quarter Vincennes University has served the community that surrounds it, inculcating culture and affording educational opportunities to thousands of young men and women. Its history and traditions are inspiring and wholesome. Its standards and achievements are worthy and creditable. It is unhampered by sectarian dogma or sectional prejudice. It possesses all of the potential possibilities that are necessary for the success of a useful and influential institution of higher learning. The wide territory in the Wabash Valley, of which it is the educational center, and which it occupies exclusive of any competitor, is sufficient for its every need.

The immediate need of the University is an adequate endowment fund. Without these resources it can hardly hope to measure up to the responsibilities that have been placed upon it. If sufficient supporting income were assured, its present holdings could be invested in a modern plant on a new campus site. It is confidently believed that its friends in the community would then provide additional funds, so as to further develop and expand its scope of usefulness.

After all, the greatest asset that the University possesses is the host of alumni, former students and friends who are determined that it shall live and prosper, for what Daniel Webster once said of Dartmouth may be said of Vincennes University: "She is a small college, sir, but there are those who love her."

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